**Is Melbourne Fair?**

Fairness, according to the oxford dictionary, is “the quality of treating people equally or in a way that is right or responsible” and “considering everything that everything has an effect on a situation, so that a fair judgment can be made”, both of which I agree with. I believe a fair society needs three things, equality between citizens, a functioning legal system and freedom of beliefs.

Equality between citizens, being gender, race, sexuality, religion or others, is important because it creates a community where no one is excluded or punished for things out of their control. During the week we had a discussion on what is fair in which we all concluded that discrimination isn’t fair. We concluded this because of the values that we hold close and how we would feel if we were excluded based on these. I also observed this in the magistrate’s courts where no matter age, gender or religion the sentences were consistent. However, in other parts of Melbourne people are excluded or hated on, mainly because of race but also because of religion.

The second thing a fair society needs is a functioning legal system. This is important because it stops people being punished unfairly, being punished for things they didn’t do and stops criminals from getting away free. As mentioned previously, our group got to go to the magistrate’s court and observe some cases and I agreed with the sentences given. We didn’t actually witness a murder case but the ones I do hear about I don’t usually agree with because the sentences are 5 or 10 years. On a law website, it states the most likely time of imprisonment is “a period of 20 years” and “18 years” for first time offenders. I agree with these more but sometimes can’t justify taking the rest of a person’s life away with 20 years.

Freedom of beliefs is another important thing for society to have and it ties in with equality between citizens. This is important because allows people to live their own lives without judgment from others. We didn’t have much of an in depth look at this though we did see some protesters standing up for something they believe in and were able t0o have a workshop on activism which is also standing up for what you believe or think needs changing. I think that every opinion and belief shouldn’t be discredited because it clashes with your own.

Comparing Melbourne to the things above, I don’t think Melbourne is entirely fair to everyone but it used to be a lot worse. Over time the job pay has equaled out so it is fairer and most of Melbourne is now equal. Unfortunately some places in Melbourne, mainly outer suburbs, people aren’t always treated as equal and opinions/ beliefs are silenced. Overall, Melbourne is as close as you can get to “fair” if you know where to live.

Resources

<http://www.armstronglegal.com.au>